expressed concern at the continued fighting among and within Liberian factions, which had virtually halted the disarmament process.

The Council said the fighting made it very difficult for the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) to implement its mandate. The fighting also prevented the Cease-Fire Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG) from carrying out functions regarding disarmament and demobilization. That situation threatened the ability of the parties to maintain the Cotonou Agreement timetable. The Council called on the parties to resolve their difference within the forum of the Transitional Government and the Agreement, and to end the fighting. It also reminded them of the importance it attached to the elections to be held on 7 September.

The Council reaffirmed its intention to review the situation in Liberia again by 30 June, and asked the Secretary-General to prepare options by that date regarding the future implementation of UNOMIL's mandate and its continued operations. It reminded the parties that responsibility for the success of the peace process rested with them and the Liberian people, and urged them to fully respect the Cotonou Agreement.

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The Assistant Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations, Iqbal Riza, and the Secretary-General's Military Adviser, General Maurice Baril, today held talks in northern Rwanda with representatives of the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF). According to a United Nations spokesman, arrangements were being made to guarantee their safe passage to Kigali, where Mr. Riza and General Baril planned further talks on implementation of Security Council resolution 918 (1994). That resolution increased the strength of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) to 5,500 troops and expanded its mandate to provide security for civilians and humanitarian relief operations. Earlier today, the two parties to the conflict agreed to a cease-fire to facilitate Mr. Riza's mission.

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Back at Headquarters after his recent visit to Europe and South Africa, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today met with the Foreign Minister of Israel, Shimon Peres. Their discussion focused on the Middle East peace process, particularly the implementation of the Gaza/Jericho stage of the Declaration of Principles.

The Secretary-General informed Mr. Peres of his efforts to ensure a coordinated approach for the provision of United Nations economic and social assistance in the occupied territories, and of his intention to appoint a Special Coordinator soon. He said the Organization was prepared to play a greater role in the search for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement in the Middle East. He noted the long experience there of agencies

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such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

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The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has expressed its willingness to receive a consultation team of senior safeguards officials from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). However, in a telex to the Agency dated 19 May, the People's Republic reaffirmed its position on the safeguards measures in connection with the refuelling of its 5MWe Experimental Power Reactor. The IAEA team is expected to arrive in the country tomorrow, and will seek to clarify means of implementing the requisite safeguards measures at the Reactor.

Last week, the IAEA said the People's Republic had seriously breached the nuclear safeguards agreement by discharging fuel from the Experimental Reactor without implementing the safeguards measures. It asked the People's Republic to make arrangements for those safeguards and to defer any further fuel discharge, saying it would otherwise be unable to determine if nuclear material had been diverted.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has highlighted the need for immediate compliance with the Security Council's demand, in resolution (913) 1994, for a cease-fire agreement in Gorazde and throughout Bosnia and Herzogovina. In a report to the Council dated 19 May, he said that without such an agreement, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) would not be able to ensure compliance with partial cease-fires, military exclusion zones and ultimatums by regional organizations.

The Secretary-General stressed the need for a comprehensive cease-fire lasting at least four months. During that period, every effort must be made to achieve an overall political settlement by all parties. He noted that some troop contributors had indicated that they would withdraw their contigents from UNPROFOR if substantial progress were not achieved within two months.

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Disaster migitation could not be divorced from development issues, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Peter Hansen, told delegates today at the opening of the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction in Yokohama, Japan. Natural disasters inflicted fewer casualties in high-income countries, but development could also harm the environment, with unforeseen consequences, he noted. During periods of rapid economic growth, governments did not always enforce construction codes or industrial laws designed to protect the environment. However, one disaster could cause immense human, economic and social losses and critically damage development plans.

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Mr. Hansen said a coordinated international strategy for disaster mitigation was like preventive diplomacy -- it reduced the threat before disasters became crises. The problem of mega-cities and global population growth had not been adequately addressed, he continued. Within twenty years, half the world's population would live in urban areas. Urban planning must integrate disaster mitigation practices to ensure the world's cities were as safe as possible.

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The Trusteeship Council will begin its sixty-first session at Headquarters tomorrow, during which it will consider the situation in Palau, the last remaining Territory in the United Nations trusteeship system. The Council will have before it the 1993 report of the Administering Authority, the United States, on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The people of Palau last year voted by a margin of more than two to one to ratify the Compact of Free Association with the United States, and the report expresses the hope that implementation of the Compact would begin this year.

In a report to the Security Council in January, the Trusteeship Council said it hoped that the Trusteeship Agreement for Palau could soon be terminated. In 1990, the Council terminated the Arrangement for the other three entities comprising the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

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